

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-3, 7-13, 17-26, and 31-32 without prejudice and replace the claims as follows:

1 - 26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) A method for dechucking a substrate comprising:
projecting a first set of lift pins to lift a perimeter of the substrate a first distance above a surface of a substrate support;
projecting a second set of lift pins to lift a center portion of the substrate, the second set of lift pins positioned radially inwards of the first set of lift pins; and then
projecting the first set of lift pins to lift the substrate to a transfer position.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the first set of lift pins and the second set of lift pins have projected distances that are at least 2 mm apart.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein projecting the first set of lift pins initially lifts at least a portion of the substrate to a spaced-apart relation to the substrate support and causes the substrate to bow in a central region thereof.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein projecting the second set of lift pins initially contacts the bowed region of the substrate, putting the entire substrate in a spaced-apart relation to the substrate support.

31-32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously Presented) A method for dechucking a substrate, comprising:
contacting a plurality of a first set of lift pins by a surface prior to contacting a second set of lift pins by the surface to lift a perimeter of the substrate with the first set of lift pins and a center portion of the substrate with the second set of lift pins;

projecting the first set of lift pins a first distance above a surface of a substrate support and; and

projecting the second set of lift pins a second distance less than the first distance above the surface of the substrate support.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the surface includes a center portion and a rim that projects from the center portion.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the first set of lift pins have a first length and the second set of the lift pins have a second length which is less than the first length.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein projecting the first set of lift pins causes the substrate to form a bowed region between the first set of lift pins and the second set of lift pins contacts the substrate in the bowed region